

I am a journalist working in network radio, and I teach journalism courses at the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, New York. I have worked in local radio in the past, and understand the importance of having well trained and experienced news people at the local level. With the decline in local news at radio stations across the country in recent years, there are fewer people with the knowledge and training to work in news radio at the network level.

I am not a musician, but as a consumer I listen to music radio. The lack of local news about music and the arts on AM/FM weakens listeners' ties to each other and to the community.

The airwaves belong to the public, and the FCC should be taking a much active role on behalf of the people it serves to ensure radio stations have local programming. This includes local music, local news and arts programs. Many commercial stations are programmed by consultants who have little or no knowledge of the cities and towns they serve.

The FCC should insist that holders of broadcast licenses put on locally produced and locally originated programming. While I don't think ALL programming decisions should be made at the local level, a majority of them should be. The FCC should be doing a much better job on behalf of radio listeners.

Many different kinds of content - from live rock concerts to news and documentaries - should count as local programming. The standard should be related to the need to weave together our communities. By being local, radio stations maintain a closer relationship with the people they serve. The main task of a commercial station may be to increase ratings and deliver value to shareholders. The task of the FCC is to ensure radio stations value their listeners as well.

Of course, stations should be evaluated on community activities. An AM or FM outlet in a small community that sponsors the July 4th fireworks show is doing its part to build a sense of pride and fellowship in the area it serves. But there should also be minimum standards for news and on-air community affairs programming. In the past 20 years the quality and quantity of these programs have declined. However, given competition from the internet and satellite radio, the FCC should grant stations some flexibility in what they are required to do.

Voice tracking may be a regrettable trend, but if a station is doing a good job in other areas (local news, local community involvement etc) this may not be avoidable.

Can the FCC force stations to include local playlists? No. But it should make it clear that more local content will improve the likelihood a station will be granted a continuation of its license. The FCC should encourage competition for licenses, and invite qualified broadcasters to make their case for change.

I think low powered FM stations are a great idea. This would benefit smaller towns and rural areas.

We need a more activist FCC. A commission that works on behalf of consumers. The FCC needs to understand that terrestrial radio and television stations are granted a license to serve the public. The FCC should be the

public's guardian, protecting localism and programming content. This job is being done poorly, if at all.